

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the final Office Action dated June 22, 2010. Claims 1 to 3, 6 to 12 and 15 to 17 are pending in the application, of which Claim 1 is in independent form. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claim 1 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Japanese Patent Publication No. 11-143139 (Hideki) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,019,532 (Harris). Claims 2, 3, 6 to 12 and 15 to 17 have been rejected over 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Hideki in view of Harris and further in view of Japanese Publication No. 2002-220122 (Kazyuki). Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

The claims herein generally concern a sheet feeding apparatus. The sheet feeding apparatus includes a sheet supporting portion on which a sheet is placed and a feeding member that feeds out the sheet. The sheet feeding apparatus further includes a cover with a guide member that guides the sheet fed out by the feeding member and forms a feeding path. A regulating portion, which regulates a leading edge of the sheet placed on the sheet supporting portion, is movably mounted on the cover. The regulating portion moves relative to the cover in a retracting direction from the feeding path in association with the opening operation of the cover. An interlocking mechanism interlocks the regulating portion with an opening operation of the cover so that the regulating portion moves relative to the cover in a retracting direction from the feeding path in association with the opening operation of the cover.

It is therefore one feature of the claims herein that the regulating portion is configured to move relative to the cover in a retracting direction from the feeding path in association with the opening operation of the cover.

It is another feature of the claims herein that an interlocking mechanism interlocks the regulating portion with an opening operation of the cover so that the regulating portion moves relative to the cover in the retracting direction from the feeding path in association with the opening operation of the cover.

Applicants submit that the applied references, alone or in any permissible combination, are not seen to disclose or to suggest the foregoing arrangement, particularly the notion of a regulating portion that moves relative to the cover in a retracting direction from the feeding path in association with the opening operation of the cover, and an interlocking mechanism that interlocks the regulating portion so that the regulating portion is moved in the retracting direction when the cover is opened.

More particularly, the applied references, alone or in any permissible combination are not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of a regulating portion which is configured to regulate a leading edge of the sheet placed on the sheet supporting portion, which is movably mounted on the cover, and which is configured to move relative to the cover in a retracting direction from the feeding path in association with the opening operation of the cover, and an interlocking mechanism configured to interlock the regulating portion with an opening operation of the cover so that the regulating portion is moved relative to the cover in a retracting direction from the feeding path in association with the opening operation of the cover.

Hideki is seen to disclose an automatic manuscript conveying machine having a stopper nail to regulate the movement of a manuscript. The stopper nail has a regulating position which contacts the manuscript tray, and a retreating position evacuated from the manuscript tray. See Hideki, paragraphs [0001] and [0015].

Thus, Hideki is seen to disclose a stopper nail that has a regulated position and a retreating position.

However, Hideki is believed to be silent on a regulating portion which is configured to regulate a leading edge of the sheet placed on the sheet supporting portion, which is movably mounted on the cover, and which is configured to move relative to the cover in a retracting direction from the feeding path in association with the opening operation of the cover, and an interlocking mechanism configured to interlock the regulating portion with an opening operation of the cover so that the regulating portion is moved relative to the cover in a retracting direction from the feeding path in association with the opening operation of the cover.

Harris is seen to disclose a switch attached to a printer cover, the switch having an arm that moves into the space created between the body and the cover as the cover is opened. See Harris, column 2, lines 13 to 17. In particular, the printer has a body 103 and a cover 102. The printer also has a paper path 108 and a gap 114. The gap 114 is covered by paper as paper passes along paper path 108. The cover 102 has an open and a closed position. See Harris Fig. 1, column 2, lines 59 to 64, and column 3, lines 15 to 17. Attached to the underside of cover 102 is a switch 104 composed of a body and an arm 105. The arm has an upper position 206 and a lower position 208. In Fig. 2, arm 105 is shown in upper position 206. However, arm 105 is spring biased to lower position 208.

See Harris, Fig. 2, and column 3, lines 30 to 38. When the cover is closed, arm 105 extends from the switch body to gap 114. Because arm 105 is spring biased to lower position, it tends to enter gap 114 if gap 114 is uncovered. See Harris, Fig. 2, and column 3, lines 62 to 65. When cover 102 is opened, arm 105 moves to lower position 208. See Harris, column 4, lines 13 to 16.

Thus, Harris is seen to disclose a switch attached to a printer cover, the switch having an arm that moves to its lower position when the cover is opened.

On the other hand, the claims herein define a regulating portion which moves relative to the cover in a retracting direction from the feeding path in association with the opening operation of the cover. The regulating portion is movably mounted on the cover and regulates a leading edge of the sheet placed on the supporting portion. An interlocking mechanism interlocks the regulating portion with the opening operation of the cover, so that the regulating portion is moved relative to the cover in a retracting direction from the feeding path in association with the opening operation of the cover.

In contrast, Harris is seen to disclose a switch attached to a printer cover, the switch having an arm that moves to its lower position when the cover is opened. A switch arm is different from a regulating portion that regulates a leading edge of a sheet. Moreover, movement to a lower position when the cover is opened is different from movement relative to the cover in a retracting direction from a feeding path when the cover is opened. Therefore, Harris is believed to be silent on a regulating portion that moves relative to the cover in a retracting direction from the feeding path as the cover is opened.

Moreover, Harris is believed to be silent on an interlocking mechanism configured to interlock the regulating portion with an opening operation of the cover so

that the regulating portion is moved relative to the cover in a retracting direction from the feeding path in association with the opening operation of the cover.

Therefore, the applied references, alone or in any permissible combination, are not seen to disclose or to suggest the notion of a regulating portion that moves relative to the cover in a retracting direction from the feeding path in association with the opening operation of the cover, and an interlocking mechanism that interlocks the regulating portion so that the regulating portion is moved in the retracting direction when the cover is opened.

More particularly, the applied references, alone or in any permissible combination, are not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of a regulating portion which is configured to regulate a leading edge of the sheet placed on a supporting portion, which is movably mounted on the cover, and which is configured to move relative to the cover in a retracting direction from the feeding path in association with the opening operation of the cover, and an interlocking mechanism configured to interlock the regulating portion with an opening operation of the cover so that said regulating portion is moved relative to the cover in a retracting direction from the feeding path in association with the opening operation of the cover.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, independent Claim 1, as well as the claims dependent therefrom, is believed to recite subject matter that would not have been obvious from the applied art, and is therefore believed to be in condition for allowance.

No other matters being raised, it is believed that the entire application is fully in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

CONCLUSION

No claim fees are believed due. However, should it be determined that additional claim fees are required under 37 C.F.R. 1.16 or 1.17, the Director is hereby authorized to charge such fees to Deposit Account 06-1205.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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